



14 April 2003

Volume 4, Issue 3

# Marine Forces Pacific Force Chaplain's Newsletter

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## Highlights:

- From the Desk of Chaplain Dallman Pg. 6

## Operation Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom

### Religious Ministry Teams:

The last newsletter was our initial effort by our new staff in our quarterly communication to you. In that issue (Volume 4, Issue 2) we introduced our new staff to you. As of this writing, our Force Chaplain, Captain Henry Nixon, Jr., CHC, USN and our Force Religious Program Specialist, RPCM Cindy Blankenship, USN are forward deployed to the Marine Central Command (MARCENT) where they daily monitor our chaplains and Religious Program Specialists who are now in the Middle East in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This issue features stories about



*Chaplain's Ellis and Contreras lead a group of Marines in song during a praise and worship service.*



*U.S. Marines from the 3D Marine Air Wing bow their heads in prayer during a praise and worship service.*

chaplains and Religious Program Specialists currently in support of OIF. Our prayers and thoughts are with them daily.

Other ministry programs are highlighted within this issue. Perhaps these events will inspire others who lead and serve and can provide models and ideas for future ministry!

## From the Force Chaplain in Manama Bahrain, The Pearl of the East

Bless your Bones!

Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) is underway. In 1991, I was aboard USS SARATOGA (CV 60) in the Red Sea during Desert Storm. Twelve years later, I have the distinct privilege of supporting Religious Ministry Teams assigned to Marines.

Not long after RPCM Blankenship and I arrived, formally establishing the Chaplain's Office, MARCENT, we visited our RMTs in Kuwait. The visit was hosted by the Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC), Command Chaplain, Chaplain Al Smith (Col, US Army). His Deputy is our own CDR Carl Cwiklinski, CHC, USN, who orchestrated the visit. Supporting him is RP2 Christie Reviere (FMF, 1<sup>st</sup> FSSG) whose "can do" attitude added zest to the visit.

We visited a number of places and saw as many chaplains and RPs as possible. At Kuwait Naval Base we visited Chaplain Todd and his staff. It was very evident that the spirit of cooperation and collaboration existed there without pretense. Provision of ministry was truly seamless as RMTs from Marine and Navy commands worked together in providing a vibrant ministry.

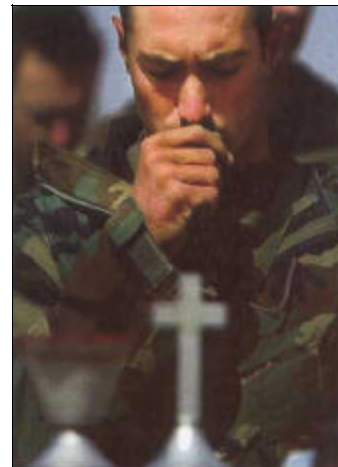
At 3D MAW, Al Jaber, Chaplain Ulysess Downing, better known as U.D., and his dynamic staff briefed us on their ministry and gave us a tour of the camp. Tremendous energy and synergy. 3D MAW's program is comprehensive to include a computer/ counseling center and a Combat Stress Recovery Center.

At I MEF, we received a comprehensive brief by Chaplain John Gwudz, better known as "The Padre". Chaplain Gwudz commented on the value of the Maritime Prepositioning Ships "God Block" which was in place on I MEF's arrival. Following the brief, Father John personally escorted us to Camp Iwo Jima where we were greeted by Chaplain Bob Malene and his fired up 1<sup>st</sup> FSSG RMTs. It was motivating to see them in

full battle gear and the RPs with their weapons at the ready.

From there we visited Camp Coyote. Chaplain Bill Devine and RP1 Stan Hicks greeted us. Once again we saw ministry at its best. Of particular note was the expeditionary baptismal pool under construction at Camp Coyote. So much more to tell; so many outstanding chaplains and RPs to acknowledge.

Throughout the visit, I looked on the faces of our chaplains and RPs, the seasoned veterans and



*A U.S. Marine prays during a Mass for the 15th Expeditionary Unit at a Marine camp in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.*

those who were experiencing a real world contingency for the first time. What I saw encouraged my heart. Etched in each face was confidence, determination and the desire to serve. I go in prayer daily with a confidence that the spiritual care of each Marine and Sailor is in capable hands. At every stop and with every group, we prayed. A sense of the Holy hovered in our presence. Please keep all of our deployed RMTs in your prayers. Angels on earth every one of them, and spiritual guides in the desert.

## Chaplain Bill Devine, 7th Marines, Featured in Washington Post

The following are excerpts from a Washington Post article of February 28, 2003. Staff Writers: Jonathan Finer and Peter Baker

LIVING SUPPORT AREA, Kuwait— While hundreds of Marines with rifles slung over their shoulders looked on, eight young men in green shorts and T-shirts approached the altar during last Sunday's church services at this military camp in the northern Kuwaiti desert. One by one they received blessings from a chaplain and plunged into a freshly dug pool to be baptized, emerging to raucous applause. As war approaches, the canvas chapels in Kuwait's military camps and logistics bases are jammed with worshipers, many of whom have not crossed the threshold of a church back home in years. The sermons on placing faith in a higher power at moments of crisis seem to resonate now more strongly than ever with many Marines.

"I don't know about you, but I find myself talking to God a lot more out here than I did at the rear," said the Rev. Bill Devine, chaplain for the 7th Marine Regiment, as the wind whipped up clouds of dust and billowed the white flag with a blue cross that flew above his outdoor Mass. "I couldn't be happier to see so many new faces out here."

Many troops call such "foxhole religion" critical to their preparation for war, saying it provides confidence that they will be protected if called upon to fight and faith that their mission is just.

Devine, 55, a Roman Catholic priest with a thick Boston accent, oversees the religious lives of several thousand Marines at Living Support Area 7, a tent city 45 miles north of Kuwait City. He and seven other chaplains offer Christian services every day and six hours of them on Sunday.



*Father Devine, 7th Marine Regiment, blesses a U.S. Marine during a Catholic mass in the camp.*



*Father Medve offers Holy Communion during a Mass for the U.S. Marines of the 15th Expeditionary Unit.*

***"I don't know about you, but I find myself talking to God a lot more out here than I did at the rear."***

***Chaplain Bill Devine***

***Roman Catholic Priest serving with the 7th Marines***

A rabbi shuttles in for a Jewish service Friday evenings, and an Islamic chaplain is due to cater to Muslim Marines. The Pentagon estimates that 0.2 percent of the U.S. military's two million members are Muslim.

As noncombatants on the battlefield, chaplains travel unarmed, protected by a "Religious Program Specialist" who carries a rifle. In war, most are assigned to medical units to support the wounded and give last rites. After fighting, they focus on helping troops deal with trauma.

Devine acknowledged afterward, as artillery shells rumbled on a nearby firing range, that battlefield conversions often do not survive the peace. "I know this doesn't necessarily mean that God will be in their lives forever," he said. "But their experiences over here will change them, and if that includes bringing God more into the picture, so much the better."



## Chaplain Philip Bagrow of 3rd FSSG Provides COMREL Assistance in the Philippines



*Chaplain Philip Bagrow is pictured at left. On the right is Colonel Douglas Legenfelder, USAF, Base Commander, presenting supplies to teachers.*

The military base where the US Forces are working with the AFP, has many dependents, just like a US base would. The Officers' Wives Club sponsors a pre-school for about 115 children, aged three through six. Upon arrival in December 2003, Bagrow and RP1 Sanks saw immediately the need for supplies. Chaplain Bagrow commented, "Our goal was to ask that EACH child receive scissors, crayons, glue, pencils, paper, etc. ~ rather than a supply to share. I knew that meant more giving on the Kinser end of things, but my idea was to do it all the way." For the presentation, Bagrow and Sanks put together a children's program and invited ALL the children from the base to attend. "By the time we presented the supplies and began the program, the children and mothers that gathered numbered about 225 ~ we were almost overwhelmed!," said Chaplain Bagrow.

## Chaplain Michael Greenwalt Chosen as Military Chaplains Association

*Dear Chaplain Greenwalt: I am pleased to inform you that you have been nominated by the Chief of Chaplains and selected as the Chaplain assigned to a Marine Corps Command to receive the Military Chaplains Association's Distinguished Service Award for 2003. Congratulations! This award is given each year to a chaplain serving with each of the uniformed services, the Civil Air Patrol, and the Department of Veterans Affairs who has demonstrated leadership and outstanding performance.*

*The Award will be presented at the Awards Banquet on Thursday, 1 May during our 78<sup>th</sup> National Institute to be held 29 April - 1 May, at the Wyndham Metairie New Orleans Hotel in Metairie, Louisiana. The Chief of Naval Operations will be our speaker at the Awards Banquet and we hope you will be able to be with us to receive the award. The National Institute is approved by DoD for attendance by DoD employees, and in recognition of your achievement, we would hope your command would provide orders for you to attend the training at the Institute as well as to be present to receive the Award.*

David E. White, RADM, CHC, USN (Ret)  
Executive Director



Chaplain Greenwalt, serving with 3D MAW, is currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom

## 60th Anniversary of Women Serving With Marines Celebrations



Chaplain Brenda Bradley-Davila

Marine Corps Base Japan's program in honor of the 60th Anniversary of Women in the U. S. Marine Corps highlighted the history of women in the USMC.

Twelve women who contributed greatly to the Corps history were highlighted. A Persona of Personalities was highlighted and concluded with Sgt Maj Johnson, the first female to attend and graduate Drill School, San Diego and the first female Drill Instructor. Gunny Sergeant LaWanda Duarte presented an expressive worship dance which spoke to the power given women by God. The guest speaker was Maj Hollie Kelly, the Executive Secretary for the Chief of Staff. She challenged women to mentor and help juniors excel in the Marine Corps.

Other programs in Marine Forces Pacific honoring women serving with

Marines were also conducted at III MEF where announcements were put in all the Sunday worship bulletins.

Chaplain Carla Barry at Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni reported this: "On February 20, 2003 we hosted a luncheon at Club Iwakuni celebrating 60 years of women in the Marine Corps. We had 119 Marines/Sailors that attended and we were featured in the Newspaper and on the Nightly News/TV on the AFN Television station."

And, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton recognized this anniversary on 09 February by honoring a WWII Veteran Woman marine who is an active member of the Protestant Congregation at Marine Memorial Chapel.

## National Day of Prayer Celebrations

On 6 February 2003, III MEF conducted Prayer Breakfasts at all our camps on Okinawa, mainland Japan, and Hawaii.

Twelfth Marine Regiment Headquarters held their breakfast in a tent at Camp Fuji with the Regimental Commander, Col George Dallas, USMC, as the guest speaker.

On Okinawa, the Navy Hospital (Chaplains Kevin Anderson and Vincent Phan), PhibGru One

(Chaplain Gary Weeden) and the Army at Torri Station (Chaplain Michael Yarman) joined in this initiative. This combined effort to focus on prayer for our nation, our political and military leaders, all deployed men and women and their families, and the families of the Columbia crew highlights the value we place upon spiritual values and divine assistance.

May God Bless America!

Chaplain Lee Milliner



## Chaplain Gary Dallmann Reports on Ministry from Camp Pendleton

### Coordinated RMT at Camp Pendleton

The Camp Pendleton Coordinated RMT resources of IMEF and Base, reservist and active duty, are effectively serving the families of sailors and marines engaged in Operation Iraqi Freedom. There are twenty-seven chaplains and nineteen Religious Program Specialists at Camp Pendleton serving IMEF, 1<sup>st</sup> MARDIV, 1<sup>st</sup> FSSG, MAG29, NAVHOSP, Mobilization Support Battalion, CREDO and Marine Corps Base.

On 25 March, Commanding General, Marine Corps Base, Major General Bowdon initiated a first-phase stand-up of the Crisis Response Center (CRC) in order to respond to the high volume of inquiries regarding the status of Marines in combat. Base Chaplains are working closely with the CRC to provide services to families requesting chaplain services.



In the event of mass casualties or a local terrorist incident, the CG will stand up the CRC on a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week basis. The Coordinated RMT will then provide continuous Chaplain coverage at the CRC on a three-watch basis together with a staff of approximately forty others. The Duty Chaplain's watch will be held at the CRC. During normal working hours, the Duty Chaplain at the CRC will refer callers and walk-in members to services and programs at the chapels, CREDO, Religious Development Center, and various chapel offices on base. After working hours the Duty Chaplain will also provide pastoral care counseling in an appropriate setting. CRC/Duty Chaplain will also provide ministry of presence to the rest of the staff at the CRC.

The Coordinated RMT at Camp Pendleton held it's first memorial service of the current operation at Marine Memorial Chapel at 1100 on 25 March.

***"The Coordinated RMT at Camp Pendleton is communicating effectively and characterized by cooperation and mutual assistance and adequate supply of Chaplains." Chaplain Dallman***

The Coordinated RMT at Camp Pendleton is also prepared to provide CACO assistance to the Marine Corps Base or MEF commands. If the need for such assistance exhausts the chaplain resources on Camp Pendleton, plans are in place to call for assistance from chaplains in other area commands, reservists, and, if ultimately required, a long and willing list of retired chaplains in the areas.

The Coordinated RMT at Camp Pendleton is communicating effectively and characterized by cooperation and mutual assistance and adequate supply of Chaplains. Our biggest challenge is the anticipated loss of three RP's in the next two months. While we expect several chaplains to move to the front, we are also looking forward to replacements arriving from the reserves.



## Awards/Promotion



### Fleet Marine Force Warfare Specialist



RPC(SW/FMF) Peter Dyksterhouse, USN  
*IIII MEF CE*

RPC(FMF) Timmy Hill, USN  
*1ST MAW*

RP1(FMF) Warren Dodson, USN  
*1ST MAW*



RP2(FMF) Dana Stevens, USN  
*1ST MAW*

RPSN(FMF) Paul Drachenberg, USN  
*3D MARDIV*

RPSN(FMF) Stacey Chamness, USN  
*1ST MAW*

RPSN(FMF) Andrew Ruth, USN  
*3D MARDIV*

RPSN(FMF) Matthew Becker, USN  
*3D MARDIV*

### Sailor of the Year

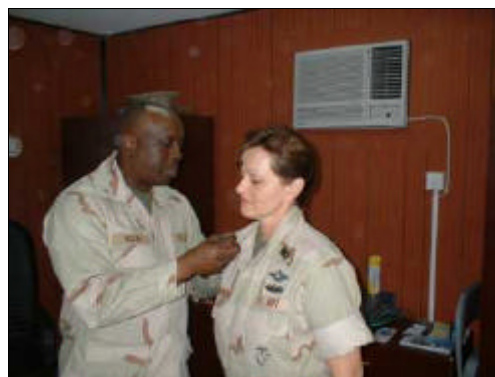


RP1(SW) Eliseo Garza, USN  
*III MEF CE*

### Junior Sailor of the Quarter

RPSN(FMF) Paul Drachenberg, USN  
*3D MARDIV*

### Promotion



RPCM(SW/FMF) Cindy Blankenship, USN

*Chaplain Nixon pins Master Chief anchors on the uniform of Cindy Blankenship during her pinning ceremony in MARCENT Bahrain.*

*Congratulations!*

## Resources Online:

### Chief of Chaplains Webpage:

[www.chaplain.navy.mil](http://www.chaplain.navy.mil)

### Bureau of Naval Personnel Homepage:

[www.bupers.navy.mil](http://www.bupers.navy.mil)

### USMC Webpage:

[www.usmc.mil](http://www.usmc.mil)

### Marine Forces Pacific Webpage:

[www.mfp.usmc.mil](http://www.mfp.usmc.mil)

### III MEF Webpage:

[www.iiimef.usmc.mil/Chaplain/index.htm](http://www.iiimef.usmc.mil/Chaplain/index.htm)

### Send a message to a troop:

[www.defendamerica.mil/](http://www.defendamerica.mil/)

### About Government, Military:

[www.GlobalSecurity.org](http://www.GlobalSecurity.org)

### Marine Corps Base Hawaii:

[www.mcbh.usmc.mil](http://www.mcbh.usmc.mil)

### Marine Corps Base Butler:

[www.mcbbutler.usmc.mil](http://www.mcbbutler.usmc.mil)

### COMPACFLT Homepage:

[www.cpf.navy.mil](http://www.cpf.navy.mil)

### LifeLines:

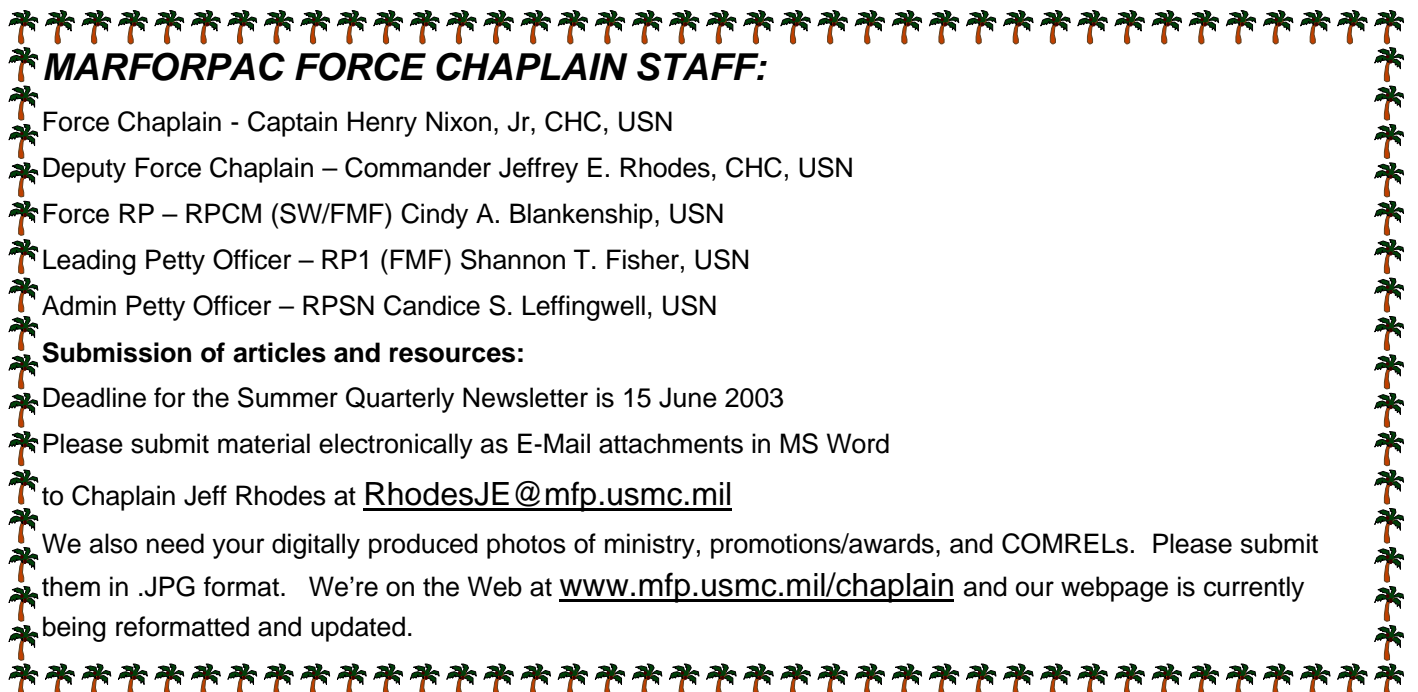
[www.lifelines4qol.org](http://www.lifelines4qol.org)

### Chaplain Care:

[www.ChaplainCare.navy.mil](http://www.ChaplainCare.navy.mil)



**Toll Free Marine Information Number: 1-866-227-2708**


**MARFORPAC FORCE CHAPLAIN STAFF:**  
 Force Chaplain - Captain Henry Nixon, Jr, CHC, USN  
 Deputy Force Chaplain – Commander Jeffrey E. Rhodes, CHC, USN  
 Force RP – RPCM (SW/FMF) Cindy A. Blankenship, USN  
 Leading Petty Officer – RP1 (FMF) Shannon T. Fisher, USN  
 Admin Petty Officer – RPSN Candice S. Leffingwell, USN  
**Submission of articles and resources:**  
 Deadline for the Summer Quarterly Newsletter is 15 June 2003  
 Please submit material electronically as E-Mail attachments in MS Word  
 to Chaplain Jeff Rhodes at [RhodesJE@mfp.usmc.mil](mailto:RhodesJE@mfp.usmc.mil)  
 We also need your digitally produced photos of ministry, promotions/awards, and COMRELs. Please submit  
 them in .JPG format. We're on the Web at [www.mfp.usmc.mil/chaplain](http://www.mfp.usmc.mil/chaplain) and our webpage is currently  
 being reformatted and updated.